

CLAIMS

1. A computer network comprising:

5 a user node to provide a request to perform a transaction and a request to record the transaction;

10 a transaction node to receive the request to perform the transaction, to perform the transaction in response, and to provide a transaction confirmation to the user node, the transaction confirmation including a command to record the transaction; and

15 a monitor node to receive the request to record the transaction provided by the user node in response to the command to record the transaction, and to record the transaction in response to the request to record the transaction.

20 2. The computer network of claim 1 wherein the user node includes a web client, the web client being used to provide the request to perform the transaction and the request to record the transaction.

25 3. The computer network of claim 2 wherein the web client is a web browser.

4. The network of claim 1 wherein the transaction includes an inquiry.

30 5. The computer network of claim 1 wherein the monitor node includes a sale log program, the sale log program being used to record the transaction between the user node and the transaction node.

35 6. The computer network of claim 5 wherein the sale log program includes a CGI script.

7. The computer network of claim 1 wherein the transaction confirmation is a confirmation web page.

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8. The computer network of claim 7 wherein the command to record the transaction is an HTML tag included in the confirmation web page.

10 9. The computer network of claim 1 further comprising a content node providing a content to the user node, wherein the content has a space for an advertisement, and wherein the user node receives the content and the advertisement.

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10. The computer network of claim 9 wherein the advertisement includes a graphics file.

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11. The computer network of claim 10 wherein the graphics file includes an ad banner.

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12. The computer network of claim 9 wherein the advertisement includes a multimedia file.

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13. The computer network of claim 12 wherein the multimedia file includes a java script.

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14. The computer network of claim 9 wherein the content node includes the advertisement, and wherein the content node provides the advertisement to the user node.

15. The computer network of claim 9 further comprising an advertisement data base, wherein the advertisement database provides the advertisement to the user node.

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16. The computer network of claim 9 further comprising
an advertisement database, wherein the advertisement database
5 provides the advertisement to the content node, and wherein
the content node provides the advertisement to the user node.

17. The computer network of claim 15 wherein the user
node provides a first request for the advertisement to the
10 monitor node, the monitor node provides a second request for
the advertisement to the advertisement database in response to
the first request, the advertisement database provides the
advertisement to the monitor node, and the monitor node
provides the advertisement to the user node.

15 18. The computer network of claim 9 wherein the
transaction node is associated with the advertisement, and the
user node provides to the monitor node a request for
redirection to the transaction node.

20 19. The computer network of claim 18 wherein the request
for redirection is provided when a user at the user node makes
a selection of the advertisement.

25 20. The computer network of claim 19 wherein the user
makes the selection by clicking on the advertisement.

21. The computer network of claim 18 wherein the request
for redirection includes a URL.

30 22. The computer network of claim 18 wherein the request
for redirection includes an IP address.

35 23. The computer network of claim 19 wherein the monitor
node monitors the selection made by the user.

24. The computer network of claim 20 wherein the monitor
node includes a sale track program, and the monitor node uses
5 the sale track program to monitor the selection made by the
user.

25. The computer network of claim 24 wherein the sale
track program includes a CGI script.

10 26. The computer network of claim 19 wherein the monitor
node compiles information related to the selection made by the
user.

15 27. The computer network of claim 26 wherein the
information related to the selection made by the user is
compiled into a block of data.

20 28. The computer network of claim 27 wherein the block
of data includes a cookie.

29. The computer network of claim 28 wherein the cookie
includes information related to the content node.

25 30. The computer network of claim 28 wherein the cookie
includes information related to the advertisement.

30 31. The computer network of claim 28 wherein the cookie
includes information related to a cookie setting date.

35 32. The computer network of claim 28 wherein the cookie
includes information related to a cookie setting time.

5 33. The computer network of claim 28 wherein the cookie includes information related to a campaign during which the advertisement is provided.

34. The computer network of claim 28 wherein the monitor node provides the cookie to the user node to be stored.

10 35. The computer network of claim 34 wherein the cookie is stored at a hard drive of the user node.

15 36. The computer network of claim 18 wherein the monitor node redirects the user node to the transaction node by providing a URL of the transaction node.

20 37. The computer network of claim 18 wherein the monitor node redirects the user node to the transaction node by providing an IP address of the transaction node.

25 38. The computer network of claim 18 wherein the user node provides a request to the transaction node to receive a transaction site page upon redirection by the monitor node.

35 39. The computer network of claim 38 wherein the transaction node provides the transaction site page to the user node in response to the request to receive the transaction site page.

40. The computer network of claim 27 wherein the user node provides a request for a GIF file from the monitor node.

41. The computer network of claim 40 wherein the GIF file is an invisible GIF file, which has 1 x 1 dimension.

42. The computer network of claim 27 wherein the user node provides a query string to the monitor node.

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43. The computer network of claim 42 wherein the query string includes information related to the transaction node.

44. The computer network of claim 42 wherein the query string includes information related to a transaction type.

10 45. The computer network of claim 42 wherein the query string includes information related to a transaction amount.

15 46. The computer network of claim 42 wherein the query string includes information related to a transacted product.

20 47. The computer network of claim 42 wherein the user node provides the block of data to the monitor node.

25 48. The computer network of claim 47 wherein the monitor node records the transaction by extracting information from the block of data and the query string.

50 49. The computer network of claim 48 wherein the monitor node records the transaction into a transaction database.

30 50. The computer network of claim 49 wherein the recorded transaction in the transaction database includes information related to a current time.

51. The computer network of claim 49 wherein the recorded transaction in the transaction database includes information related to the content node.

52. The computer network of claim 49 wherein the
recorded transaction in the transaction database includes
5 information related to the advertisement.

53. The computer network of claim 49 wherein the
recorded transaction in the transaction database includes
information related to a cookie setting date.

10 54. The computer network of claim 49 wherein the
recorded transaction in the transaction database includes
information related to a cookie setting time.

15 55. The computer network of claim 49 wherein the
recorded transaction in the transaction database includes
information related to the transaction node.

20 56. The computer network of claim 49 wherein the
recorded transaction in the transaction database includes
information related to a transaction type.

25 57. The computer network of claim 49 wherein the
recorded transaction in the transaction database includes
information related to a transaction amount.

30 58. The computer network of claim 49 wherein the
recorded transaction in the transaction database includes
information related to a transacted product.

59. The computer network of claim 49 wherein the monitor
node provides the recorded transaction to the transaction
node.

60. A method of tracking transactions over a computer network comprising:

5 providing a request to perform a transaction from a user node to a transaction node;

performing the transaction at the transaction node;

10 providing a transaction confirmation, including a command to record the transaction, from the transaction node to the user node;

15 providing a request to record the transaction in response to the command to record the transaction, from the user node to a monitor node; and

recording the transaction at the monitor node.

15 61. The method of tracking transactions of claim 60 further comprising:

20 providing content having a space for an advertisement from a content node to the user node; and

25 providing the advertisement to the user node.

62. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 61 further comprising: providing the advertisement to the user node from the content node.

25 63. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 61 further comprising: providing the advertisement to the user node from an advertisement database.

30 64. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 61 further comprising: making a selection of the advertisement at the user node.

65. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 64
wherein making the selection of the advertisement includes
5 clicking on the advertisement by a user at the user node.

66. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 64
further comprising: requesting a redirection from the user
node to the monitor node.

10 67. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 64
further comprising: compiling information related to the
selection of the advertisement at the monitor node.

15 68. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 67
wherein compiling information related to the selection
includes formatting a cookie using the information related to
the selection.

20 69. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 68
wherein formatting a cookie includes recording a cookie
setting date to indicate a date on which the cookie is
formatted.

25 70. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 68
wherein formatting a cookie includes recording a cookie
setting time to indicate a time at which the cookie is
formatted.

30 71. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 68
wherein formatting a cookie includes recording information
related to the content node.

72. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 68
wherein formatting a cookie includes recording information
5 related to the advertisement.

73. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 68
further comprising: providing the cookie from the monitor node
to the user node.

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74. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 66
further comprising: redirecting the user node to the
transaction site.

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75. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 73
further comprising: sending the cookie from the user node to
the monitor node.

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76. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 73
further comprising: sending a query string from the user node
to the monitor node.

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77. The method of tracking a transaction of claim 60
further comprising: reporting the recorded transaction to the
transaction node.

78. A method of compiling transaction information
comprising:

30 formatting a cookie at an ad server, the cookie
including information related to a selection of an
advertisement at a content site;

storing a cookie at a user node of a user who made
the selection; and

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5 providing the cookie from the user node to the ad server whenever the user makes a transaction at a sale site associated with the advertisement.

10 79. The method of compiling transaction information of claim 78 wherein the cookie further includes information related to a time at which the selection of the advertisement has been made.

15 80. The method of compiling transaction information of claim 78 further comprising providing a query string from the user node to the ad server, wherein the query string includes information related to the transaction made at the sale site.

20 81. The method of compiling transaction information of claim 80 wherein the information related to the transaction includes an identification of a purchased product.

25 82. The method of compiling transaction information of claim 81 wherein the information related to the transaction includes a purchase price of the purchased product.

30 83. The method of compiling transaction information of claim 80 further comprising recording at least a portion of the information related to the selection of the advertisement and at least a portion of the information related to the transaction into a data structure for the transaction information in the transaction database.

35 84. The method of compiling transaction information of claim 83 wherein the data structure for the transaction information includes a time of the selection of the advertisement and a time of the transaction, and the method

5 further includes comparing the time of the selection with the time of the transaction to assess time elapsed between the selection and the transaction.

10 85. The method of compiling transaction information of claim 83 wherein the data structure for the transaction information includes information related to the content site, and the method further includes crediting the content site with the transaction.

15 86. The method of compiling transaction information of claim 83 wherein the data structure for the transaction information includes information related to the advertisement, and the method further includes assessing effectiveness of the advertisement by counting a number of transactions related to the advertisement.

20 87. The method of compiling transaction information of claim 83 wherein the data structure for the transaction information includes information related to a campaign during which the advertisement is provided, and the method further includes assessing effectiveness of the campaign by counting a number of transactions related to the campaign.

25 88. The method of compiling transaction information of claim 83 wherein the data structure for the transaction information includes information related to an amount of time taken to make the transaction, and the method further includes assessing customer serving capabilities of the sale site by analyzing the amount of time taken to make the transaction.